

he noticed that in kneeling to level his telescope, his light walking sword had slipped from its sheath. He returned to where he had used his spy-glass. While there he took another look, and saw that Charlottesville was overrun with British soldiers. He mounted his horse and escaped. If he had returned to his mansion, as was his original intention, he would surely have been captured, for the troopers by an unsuspected route had entered his doors five minutes after his departure.

The mansion at Monticello, thanks to Tarleton's orders, escaped serious pillage or damage. Though the house itself was not plundered or burnt, the rest of Governor Jefferson's property suffered severely at the hands of the enemy. All the stock and farm, products that might be of service were carried off, the rest being wantonly destroyed. Jefferson was especially outraged at the treatment of his slaves. Twenty-seven of these were carried off by Cornwallis. Most of them returned afterwards, but died of a pestilence contracted while in captivity. The dislike of England that showed itself so emphatically in Jefferson's subsequent career may be ascribed largely to Cornwallis' general devastation of Virginia, his own experience of wanton outrage lending a personal tinge to his bitterness.

On October 19th, 1781, the ravages of Cornwallis were brought to an end at Yorktown, and peace and civil law resumed their sway in Virginia. But victory did not bring peace to Jefferson's mind. The public disapprobation* of his conduct as Governor continued to disturb him long after every one else had ceased to think of the matter. He would not rest without what we should call a "vindication." He had himself elected from Albemarle to the Assembly expressly that he, might in person meet certain charges that it was said would be brought against him. At the proper time he arose and asked for the charges. No one had any charges to make. "Not a word was heard in reply." Jefferson then made a statement exculpating himself from every real and fancied charge. The legislature was in the kindest humor with him—it was just two months after Yorktown—and

*See Approbation, page 140.